

18 July 1958

BRIEF FOR: The Career Council

SUBJECT: Certificate of Merit With Distinction

1. Of the five CIA Honor Awards four are medals and only one, the Certificate of Merit (with fixed honorarium of \$100) is within the reach of the great body of employees, for recognition of meritorious service or superior performance. There would appear to exist a psychological barrier to the award of the Certificate of Merit - a supervisory tool of great potential value - since it is linked to the traditional concept of "an Honor Award with medal and ribbon". ^{most} Only 12 Certificates of Merit have been approved in the past two years since the award was established. It was the intention of the Career Council at that time that the Certificate of Merit be used widely. The Office of Personnel has budgeted for 100 Certificates in each of the last two Fiscal Years.

2. Since the staff study which created the Certificate of Merit was approved by the Career Council, experience has shown that there exists the need for a means of recognizing superior performance for which the award of the Certificate of Merit is not appropriate. The Incentive Awards Act of 1954 removed the legal basis whereby meritorious step-increases could be granted. Grade promotions as reward for meritorious service should not be too widely used since promotion policies and grade ranges would thereby become distorted.

3. It is therefore recommended that the Career Council approve:
- a. Changing of the name of the Honor Awards Board to the Honor and Merit Awards Board.

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This psychological barrier can be overcome by the intervention of another certificate of merit of higher grade - thus permitting the wider use of the existing certificate. This thought coincides with the following defferent consideration.

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b. Creating a Certificate of Merit With Distinction to be accompanied by an honorarium which will in no case exceed \$5000. This award would be granted either for meritorious service, superior performance, or for acceptance of hazard or unusual conditions over and beyond the normal requirements of the assignment.

c. Establishing a guideline for determining the amount of the honorarium, e.g. a rounded-off sum, based on twenty-five percent of the base pay for the period during which the service or duty was performed unless the reward is for relatively instantaneous action in which case the Honor and Merit Awards Board would determine the amount.